

# TMNT™

The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles return to the big screen as never before in an all-new CGI action adventure, written and directed by Kevin Munroe.

After the defeat of their old arch nemesis, The Shredder, the Turtles have grown apart as a family. Struggling to keep them together, their rat sensei, Splinter (Mako), becomes worried when strange things begin to brew in New York City. Tech-industrialist Maximillian J. Winters (Patrick Stewart) is raising up an army of ancient monsters, and only one super-ninja fighting team can stop them—Leonardo (James Arnold Taylor), Michelangelo (Mikey Kelley), Donatello (Mitchell Whitfield) and Raphael (Nolan North)! With the help of old allies April O’Neil (Sarah Michelle Gellar) and Casey Jones (Chris Evans), the Turtles are in for the fight of their lives as they once again must face the mysterious Foot Clan, who have put their own ninja skills behind Winters’ endeavors.

Making this new incarnation of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles truly cutting-edge, the film was created entirely with state-of-the-art CG animation, giving them a completely new look for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Warner Bros. Pictures and The Weinstein Company present an Imagi Animation Studios Production, “TMNT,” featuring the voices of Chris Evans, Sarah Michelle Gellar, Mako, Kevin Smith, Patrick Stewart, Ziyi Zhang, and narrated by Laurence Fishburne. Kevin Munroe wrote and directed the film, which is produced by Thomas K. Gray, H. Galen Walker and Paul Wang. The executive producers are Francis Kao, Peter Laird, Gary Richardson and Frederick U. Fierst, with Felix Ip serving as co-producer. The music is by Klaus Badelt.

Opening nationwide on March 23, "TMNT" will be distributed domestically and in select international territories by Warner Bros. Pictures, a Warner Bros. Entertainment Company. The Weinstein Company will distribute the film in other international territories.

"TMNT" has been rated "PG" by the MPAA for "animated action violence, some scary cartoon images and mild language."

[www.tmnt.com](http://www.tmnt.com)

**"Let's make a movie, dude."**

*- Peter Laird, TMNT co-creator*

The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles were created in 1984 by Peter Laird and Kevin Eastman. "TMNT" writer-director Kevin Munroe reveals, "They did it to spoof the world of superhero characters. The original comic book was published in black-and-white and only 3,000 copies were printed, which, much to everyone's surprise, sold out right away."

Within a year, Laird and Eastman were approached with a toy license, which was followed by a cartoon television series and three live-action feature films over the course of nine years. The live-action films, released in the early 1990s, provided a brand-new TMNT experience for audiences around the world with state-of-the-art animatronics and expert martial arts choreography.

Producer Thomas K. Gray, who also served as producer on all three previous TMNT films, notes, "We wanted to take the Turtles to another level in film and do something we hadn't done before. For more than 20 years, they have been one of the most popular toys sold in several parts of the U.S. as well as Europe, Australia and in some Asian-Pacific countries. With the syndicated cartoon series doing great, and the comic book enjoying cult status, we wanted to give the fans something new."

Even with the perennial success of the TMNT franchise, the film's producers still had the task of convincing the creators to grant them the rights to bring their heroic, sewer-dwelling bipeds back to the big screen.

Producer H. Galen Walker offers that in an early meeting with Peter Laird to pitch the idea for the new TMNT feature, "I was nervous, because Peter didn't really know me, and everybody from the company was waiting for an answer. So there we were, walking along, and as I was about to ask the big question, he puts his hand across my chest to stop me and says, 'turtle.' I looked down, and saw this little turtle crossing our path!"

But, in spite of witnessing such serendipity, Walker didn't know that he had Laird's formal blessing until, he recalls, "I was on the airplane flying back, and I opened the book that Peter autographed for me. On the first page he wrote, 'Let's make a movie, dude.'"

To re-imagine "TMNT" for a new generation, the producers turned to up-and-coming animation filmmaker Kevin Munroe. Gray comments, "Kevin came in and designed a great trailer for us. It was obvious that he loved the Turtles and we really liked his ideas. It turned out to be a beautiful fit."

### **Daring to go where no Turtles have gone before...**

Production of "TMNT" took place over roughly 28 months, in two very different locations: Sherman Oaks in sunny Southern California and on the other side of the Pacific Ocean in Hong Kong. More than 300 artists were employed in Hong Kong and nearly 70 artists in Los Angeles. With the production offices separated by 7,000-plus miles, a project like this would have been almost inconceivable in the pre-high speed internet era.

However, with access to advanced video teleconferencing and high-speed point-to-point data transfers, Munroe says, "It felt like the Hong Kong office was just a click away. Also, because of the time difference, we could work around the clock. When it's five in the afternoon in LA, it's nine in the morning in Hong Kong, so we could teleconference at the end of our day, while they were just starting theirs."

Walker notes, "Having a 24-hour production schedule allowed us to move faster. But, you know, not everyone in LA got to go home at the end of the day, since there would be issues from Hong Kong that needed to be addressed during their working hours—also known as our *middle of the night*. It was extremely taxing, but Kevin and the team handled it wonderfully, and the animators in Hong Kong were amazing."

However, there were some barriers that were not so easily overcome by modern technology.

Producer Paul Wang notes that the Hong Kong crew were given a crash course in Americanisms, "Kevin speaks with a lot of slang, so it took a few meetings for them to accept that when Kevin said 'cool,' he wasn't referring to temperature, but that he meant 'it's approved.'"

Munroe remarks, "It was interesting to work with so many of the artists in Hong Kong because they have such a deep appreciation for martial arts, which complemented the style of the film. These are guys in their twenties who've been raised on Kung Fu action flicks, and when I would say things like, 'Okay, I want you to make your own Kung Fu movie in this scene,' they'd just go nuts over it."

In establishing a fresh storyline for the all-new CGI version of "TMNT," the director states, "We didn't want to go back and remake the original, so we decided to start a new chapter in the Turtles' lives. We wanted to focus on each of the Turtles more by emphasizing their family relationship and how it's evolved since the last time we saw them."

Drawing inspiration from modern-day family dynamics, Munroe chose to begin his story with a rift in the close-knit team. He expounds, "Splinter has sent Leonardo away on a worldwide training mission; and he has become even more protective of the remaining Turtles by discouraging them from fighting crime without Leonardo."

As a result, the remaining Turtles' sense of purpose has become somewhat derailed in the humdrum of their day-to-day lives. Tech-guru Donatello has been reduced to providing computer technical support over the phone, and fun-loving Michelangelo has resorted to entertaining kids at

birthday parties as “Cowabunga Carl,” a clown-for-hire in a “fake” turtle suit. Hot-headed Raphael, whose burning quest for justice doesn’t wait for anyone, has assumed the secret persona of a solo crime-fighting vigilante, known to the outside world only as “The Nightwatcher.”

Providing the voices for the Turtles are veteran voice-over artists: James Arnold Taylor as Leonardo; Mikey Kelley as Michelangelo; Nolan North as Raphael; and Mitchell Whitfield as Donatello. Once again representing the wise father figure in the Turtle Lair is Splinter, voiced by the late Oscar-nominated, Japanese-American actor Mako.

Munroe offers, “Splinter’s biggest concern is the unity of their family. When Leonardo comes home from training, we see Raphael showing a little resentment towards Leo—kind of like a kid who’s envious of his brother who went to college while he stayed at home to work in the family business.”

Raphael’s frustration becomes more apparent as the well-disciplined and perhaps a tad self-righteous Leonardo openly condemns the latest triumph of The Nightwatcher. Brotherhood and egos are put to the test when Leonardo catches the rogue crime-fighter in action, setting the two on a collision course that brings forth a never-before-seen face-off between Leonardo and Raphael.

With trouble brewing at home, even bigger problems lay on the horizon. “We continued the storyline that The Shredder has been defeated and, as a result, the Turtles’ other nemeses, Karai and the Foot Clan, have basically become muscle for hire, acting as a private army for anybody who’s willing to pay the price,” reveals Munroe.

Karai, the de facto leader of the Foot Clan, is voiced by the martial arts-trained Chinese actress Ziyi Zhang, who first caught the world’s attention in Ang Lee’s “Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon,” and more recently received multiple award nominations for her leading role in Rob Marshall’s “Memoirs of a Geisha.”

Munroe continues, “One of the clients Karai and the Foot Clan end up working for is the enigmatic Maximillian J. Winters, a very powerful multi-billionaire who lives in a monolithic tower and collects ancient artifacts from

around the world. He's a very mysterious guy and, as the movie goes on, we realize that he's collecting monsters. As a result, really strange things start happening in New York City fueled by Winters' secret plan."

Winters is voiced by award-winning actor Patrick Stewart, who already has experience in the mutant superhero milieu as Professor Charles Xavier from the "X-Men" films. Stewart recalls being familiar with the Turtles franchise 20 years ago when his son was a fan and, now, is proud to introduce the exciting world of half-shelled heroism to his grandchildren.

Describing his character, Stewart offers, "Max is not what he seems. He may look like a healthy, vigorous and modern individual, but, as his character unfolds, we see why he is such an anomaly in today's world."

Caught in the middle of Winters' plot is the Turtles' friend and ally April O'Neil, an archaeologist who collects rare treasures and artifacts for wealthy individuals.

"When April returns from her latest overseas expedition, she unwittingly brings a relic home that could be the catalyst for possible Armageddon," says the director. "Of course, she's completely in the dark about its true origin because she's just doing a job for her client...Max Winters."

April O'Neil is voiced by Sarah Michelle Gellar, who has portrayed something of a superhero in her own right on the hit television series "Buffy the Vampire Slayer," and more recently starred in the horror thrillers "The Grudge" and "The Grudge 2."

A fan of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles cartoon series herself, Gellar recalls seeing the program for the first time in the late '80s. "I remember sitting at home, flipping through *TV Guide* when I saw a listing for a show called 'Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.' It's a household name now, but when I first saw it, I thought it was the strangest combination of words. And I remember laughing and thinking, 'This is great, I am definitely watching this!'"

Original TMNT fans may also remember the baseball bat-wielding, hockey mask-wearing vigilante Casey Jones. Another Turtle ally and

boyfriend of April O'Neil, Casey is voiced by actor Chris Evans. Evans also has experience in the superhero realm, having recently played Johnny Storm in the action adventure film "Fantastic Four," based on the comic book series of the same name.

Munroe offers, "Casey is just a guy who misses the good old days of vigilante crime-fighting with the Turtles. In this film, Casey and April are now an item, but April doesn't like the whole hockey-mask vigilante thing, so they're at a crossroads and aren't getting along the way they used to."

With tension abounding, the tone of the all-new TMNT film "is very different from the TV series and previous films," says the director. "Stylistically, it's more like the comics. The action's more intense, and the threat to the world is more intense, as are the emotions of the main characters."

Also lending his voice talents to the film is Laurence Fishburne, who provides narration for critical flashback scenes that take us back 3,000 years where the story begins.

Additionally, longtime TMNT fan and writer-director-actor Kevin Smith serves up a cameo role as the Diner Cook, who faces one of Winters' unruly monsters.

## **Designing "TMNT"**

To bring his vision for the latest incarnation of TMNT to life, Munroe sought the talents of veteran art director/concept illustrator Simon Murton. With more than 25 years of experience in film concept illustration and design, Murton counts among his recent film credits "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," "I, Robot," "Van Helsing" and "The Matrix Revolutions."

Munroe says, "This was Simon's first all-CGI project and, to me, that's the most exciting thing about it because he had a different take on design coming from live action. I told him that, when we're done, I want to be able to go through this movie, and pull any frame of the film and put it into a comic book...in widescreen, of course."

“We began with cinematic cues from certain black-and-white films from the 1940s and ‘50s,” notes Murton. “I really wanted to push the lighting and the environments to create the look and feel of an alternate reality.”

With most of the story set in New York City, Murton stylized the familiar Manhattan skyline and urban landscapes to make them appear uniquely “TMNT.”

For an action sequence early in the film where Michelangelo turns the sewers into his personal, extreme skate park, Murton describes, “I found excellent examples from waterworks projects in Hong Kong and Japan. Pipes in those places have to serve such dense populations that they make for some very interesting designs and shapes, which, in Mikey’s mind, are perfect for ollies and railslides.”

The look of Winters’ monolithic tower was inspired by architectural illustrations from 1920s New York and Chicago.

The art director offers, “Max Winters is a very successful man with the world at his fingertips. We gave him a huge, round office that also worked as an encased, glass elevator, so he can access any floor at the push of a button. The elevator office became the defining exterior feature of the Winters Tower.”

Three basic levels of the city were designed to juxtapose Turtle “safe” zones against human zones. Particular attention was paid to how a ninja would move stealthily through the city.

“A ninja would use shadows, rooftops and sewers to get around and remain undetected. To indicate Turtle ‘safe’ zones we made the sewers warmer-looking, with rich browns and reds, versus the surface streets, which are lit with bright neon signs that seem very alienating to the Turtles,” notes Munroe. “The rooftops are also a safe zone for them, warmly lit by the night sky and the lights below. Like the sewers, it’s a quiet place for the Turtles to look at the world from extreme vantage points.”



## Digitally Outfitted Heroes

Half the battle in creating believable, CG-animated lean green crime-fighting machines was fought by digital artists who were responsible for researching and developing the Turtles' overall musculature, along with such details as the translucency of their skin and each of the characters' defining traits.

"We designed full-on muscle systems for the Turtles because they're essentially wearing nothing but a sash and a half-shell," Munroe explains. "We also gave them unique characteristics. For example, on Raphael, he actually has veins that pop out whenever he flexes, and Michelangelo has freckles."

Apart from the reptilian crime-fighters, Splinter, a human-sized, mutated sewer rat, presented the animators with another challenge. Munroe describes, "Not only is Splinter furry, but he wears a robe. So we fully rendered and animated the robe as well as his fur to show the effects of movement and outside elements."

Exterior structures ranging from muscles to shells to tentacles also had to be designed and animated for Winters' monsters—all 13 of them.

"A few of Max's monsters are based on those in popular folklore. We also created some monsters that are slightly off the beaten path like a little guy we jokingly dubbed 'The Jersey Devil Monster,' which is a little crustacean-like creature who's basically a freakishly strong koala bear with a bad temper," jokes the director.

Beyond attention to the aesthetic quality of the backgrounds and characters, much effort was spent on choreographing the fight sequences for maximum impact.

Working closely with Munroe, animation director Kim Ooi was responsible for overseeing the execution of anything that moves on screen. Ooi offers, "The Turtles' fighting style is derived from Chinese and Japanese-style martial arts. Many of the fight sequences were inspired by Hong Kong action films, but because we're doing CGI, we can push and stylize beyond the limits of live action."

Movement for each of the Turtles was also scrutinized to enhance their individual characteristics. Ooi explains, "For Leonardo, he's very confident because he's the oldest and the leader, so he walks very tall and has good posture. Raphael's the rebel, so he's got a bit of a swagger. Michelangelo is the more childlike one, so he's jumpy and restless. And Donatello's movements are more subdued because he's the intellectual one and characterized by more polite gestures."

In tackling one of the most action-packed sequences in the film, Ooi says, "There's a sequence where three Turtles, together with April, Casey and Splinter, are trying to rescue Leonardo. They have to go through tons of foot ninjas to get into the tower, and it was the most challenging of sequences because there are so many things happening at once."

Perhaps the most important challenge was staying true to TMNT fans while creating a completely new look for a new generation. Tom Gray attests, "We wanted to stay true to the concept while taking the Turtles in a new direction. We went back to the original comic book, which is actually grittier than the previous films. We think this will be a fun experience for core fans and new fans alike."

Munroe concludes, "We've done everything possible in this film to fill it with wall-to-wall action and classic TMNT humor. At the end of the day, this is a story about a typical American family," smiles the director, "that is, if your family lives underground and saves the world battling countless ninjas and big bad monsters!"

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## **ABOUT THE CAST**

**CHRIS EVANS** (Casey) has emerged in recent years as one of the busiest young actors in Hollywood. In addition to "TMNT," he has three films upcoming in 2007, beginning with the sci-fi thriller "Sunshine," for director Danny Boyle, followed by "The Nanny Diaries," opposite Scarlett Johansson. This summer, he stars in "Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer," in which he reprises the role of Johnny Storm, a.k.a. The Human Torch.

Raised in Massachusetts, Evans began acting in regional theatre before moving to New York, where he studied at the Lee Strasberg Institute. He made a few guest appearances on television series before landing his first feature film starring role in the comedy spoof "Not Another Teen Movie." His next film was the crime comedy "The Perfect Score," in which he starred with Scarlett Johansson and Erika Christensen. Switching gears, he starred with Kim Basinger, William H. Macy and Jessica Biel in the thriller "Cellular," playing a young man who is drawn into a kidnapping plot.

In 2005, Evans starred in four feature films, including the summer action hit "Fantastic Four," in which he joined Jessica Alba, Michael Chiklis and Ioan Gruffudd as a group of astronauts who gain individual super powers after they are exposed to cosmic radiation. Also that year, Evans starred in the independent features "The Orphan King," opposite Alexis Bledel; "Fierce People," with Diane Lane and Donald Sutherland; and, most recently, the romantic drama "London," opposite Jessica Biel.

**SARAH MICHELLE GELLAR** (April O'Neil) is an award-winning actress who is well known to both film and television audiences. She stars in four upcoming independent features to be released in 2007, including the romantic comedy/drama "The Girl's Guide to Hunting and Fishing," opposite Alec Baldwin; "The Air I Breathe," with Forest Whitaker, Kevin Bacon, Andy Garcia, Emile Hirsch and Brendan Fraser; "Addicted," in which she plays a woman whose life is thrown into chaos after a freak car accident; and "Southland Tales," an ensemble piece set in Los Angeles of the not-too-

distant future as it stands on the brink of social, economic and environmental disaster. Gellar stars opposite The Rock and Seann William Scott in the film, which premiered at the 2006 Cannes Film Festival.

Her previous film credits include "The Grudge" and its recent sequel "The Grudge 2"; "Scooby-Doo" and its sequel "Scooby-Doo 2: Monsters Unleashed"; "Harvard Man"; "Cruel Intentions"; "Scream 2"; and "I Know What You Did Last Summer." She most recently lent her voice to the animated feature "Happily N'Ever After."

Gellar is perhaps best known for her role on the long-running series "Buffy the Vampire Slayer," in which she starred as the title character. During the show's seven-season run, she earned a Golden Globe nomination for Best Actress in a Drama Series. Earlier in her career, Gellar won an Emmy Award and earned another Emmy nomination for her work on the popular ABC daytime drama "All My Children."

Apart from her acting work, Gellar is involved in a wide range of charitable organizations, including Susan G. Komen for the Cure, the Make-a-Wish Foundation, Habitat for Humanity, Project Angel Food and the Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation.

**MAKO** (Splinter) had a successful career that spanned five decades and encompassed more than 50 features and more than 100 television appearances. In 1967, he was honored with Academy Award and Golden Globe nominations for his major feature film debut performance in Robert Wise's "The Sand Pebbles." His subsequent film credits included "The Hawaiians," "Conan the Barbarian," "Tucker: The Man and His Dream," "Pacific Heights," "Rising Sun," "Seven Years in Tibet," "Pearl Harbor" and, most recently, "Memoirs of a Geisha," to name only a portion.

On television, he was seen in guest roles on series dating back to the mid-1960s, and more recently including "The West Wing," "Monk," "Charmed" and "7<sup>th</sup> Heaven." His television credits also included such telefilms as "When Hell Was in Session," "Columbo: Murder Under Glass," "Farewell to Manzanar" and "If Tomorrow Comes."

Mako also worked on the stage, most notably in the Broadway musical "Pacific Overtures," for which he received a Tony Award nomination in 1976. He was also the first artistic director of the nation's premier Asian American theatre organization, East West Players, based in Los Angeles, and was later named Artistic Director Emeritus of the company.

**KEVIN SMITH** (Diner Cook) has seen it all—from the surprise critical and commercial success he received for his debut film "Clerks," to the disappointing critical and commercial drubbing he took on his second outing, "Mallrats." He caught a break on his third film, the critically hailed "Chasing Amy," managed not to get killed by religious zealots over his fourth film, the comedic meditation "Dogma," and made a very profitable ninety-five minute in-joke with "Jay And Silent Bob Strike Back." The joke, however, was on him once "Jersey Girl" hit screens. Mercifully, there was the made-classy-with-Roman-Numerals "Clerks II" to the rescue, the film that offered a second visit with both the characters (Dante and Randal) and the accolades (an eight-minute standing ovation in Cannes and the Audience Award at the Edinburgh Film Festival) that launched his career.

Along the way, Smith has also found time to make himself a nuisance by smearing his name all over John Pierson's indie-film bible, *Spike, Mike, Slackers and Dykes*. He's published the screenplays to six of his films, written comic books featuring not only his own characters (the multiple-printed *Clerks* and *Jay and Silent Bob*), but also legendary mainstays of the superhero world (the award-winning *Daredevil* and *Spider-Man* and the *Black Cat* at Marvel Comics, and the award-winning *Green Arrow* at DC Comics), and written a monthly column for UK based *Arena Magazine* – the lion's share of which were reprinted in the best-selling book *Silent Bob Speaks*. With his View Askew partner, Scott Mosier, he's also executive-produced four low-budget, first-film efforts (including Bryan Johnson's "Vulgar"), one large-budget, multiple Academy Award winner ("Good Will Hunting"), and a pair of Sundance-selected documentaries ("Reel Paradise" and "Small Town Gay Bar").

Besides "Mallrats" and "Jersey Girl," however, Smith has survived other humbling "creative" experiences that he's inexplicably failed to suppress—including his animated series version of "Clerks," which was unceremoniously aired only twice.

Smith was one of the first filmmakers to venture into cyberspace, establishing the insanely popular View Askewiverse website ([www.viewaskew.com](http://www.viewaskew.com)) in the mid-nineties, which in turn spawned a bevy of other Smith-centric sites, including his online diary entitled "My Boring-Ass Life," found at [www.silentbobspeaks.com](http://www.silentbobspeaks.com). And if the film thing doesn't pan out, there's always retail: Smith owns two comic book stores, both named Jay and Silent Bob's Secret Stash (one in Red Bank, New Jersey and the other in Westwood, Los Angeles).

As for the hood ornaments he's collected, there's plenty of tin to go around: the Filmmaker's Trophy at Sundance for "Clerks," the Prix de la Jeunesse and the International Critic's Week Award at the Cannes Film Festival, also for "Clerks," the Independent Spirit Award for Best Screenplay for "Chasing Amy," and a Humanitas Award for "Good Will Hunting."

Smith also received the Defender of Democracy Award from Norman Lear's People for the American Way for his production of "Dogma." For his writing in the comics field, Smith has received a Harvey Award, a Wizard Fan Award, and an Eagle Award; in addition, *Green Arrow: Quiver* was named as one of 2003's Best Books for Young Adults by the American Library Association's Young Adult Library Service. In the fall of 2002, the town of Paulsboro, New Jersey named a street after him: Kevin Smith Way. In 2004, the Video Software Dealers Association gave Smith the DVD Visionary Award, and, in 2005, he collected the Independent Spirit Award from Britain's Empire Magazine. Most recently, in April of 2006, he was given UCLA's Jack Benny Award for Comedy, joining a prestigious list of previous honorees that includes Johnny Carson, John Belushi, David Letterman, John Cleese, and Adam Sandler.

Smith most recently starred in the romantic comedy/drama "Catch and Release," with Jennifer Garner.

At the end of the day, the two titles Smith touts most proudly are "husband" and "father." He married wife Jennifer in April 1999 and celebrated the birth of their daughter, Harley Quinn, in June of that same year (you do the math).

**PATRICK STEWART** (Winters) is an internationally respected actor, known for successfully bridging the gap between the worlds of classical theatre and contemporary film and television. Stewart most recently starred in "X-Men: The Last Stand," the third installment of the blockbuster "X-Men" films, in which he reprised the role of Professor Charles Xavier.

He also starred in four installments of another successful movie franchise, the "Star Trek" features, bringing the character of Captain Jean-Luc Picard to the big screen in "Star Trek: Generations," "Star Trek: First Contact," "Star Trek: Insurrection" and "Star Trek: Nemesis." For his portrayal of Captain Picard on the television show "Star Trek: The Next Generation," Stewart received a Screen Actors Guild (SAG) Award nomination for Best Actor in a Drama Series in 1995. In addition to starring on the series for seven seasons, Stewart also directed several episodes.

Stewart earned another SAG Award nomination for his performance as Ebenezer Scrooge in TNT's 1999 presentation of Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol," which he also executive produced. The television adaptation of "A Christmas Carol" continued Stewart's cherished association with the Dickens classic. In 1991, he introduced his widely acclaimed solo presentation of "A Christmas Carol," in which he plays all of the story's more than 40 characters. Opening the show on Broadway, he went on to win a Drama Desk Award for Best Solo Performance. When Stewart took the play to London in 1993, he garnered an Olivier Award for Best Solo Performance and another Olivier Award nomination for Best Actor. He has since performed "A Christmas Carol" for rapt theatre audiences throughout the United States and England.

Bringing another literary classic to television, Stewart starred as Captain Ahab in the USA Network's 1998 presentation of "Moby Dick,"

earning Emmy and Golden Globe Award nominations for Best Actor in a Miniseries or Movie. He more recently received a Golden Globe nomination for his performance in Showtime's remake of "A Lion in Winter." Additionally, Stewart gained an Emmy nomination for Outstanding Made for Television Movie for his work as an executive producer on that project.

Stewart most recently starred in the Granada television series "Eleventh Hour." His long list of television credits also includes such longform projects as "King of Texas," "Animal Farm," "The Canterville Ghost," "In Search of Dr. Seuss," "The Devil's Disciple," "Smiley's People," "Hamlet, Prince of Denmark," "Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy," "I, Claudius," "North and South" and "The Gathering Storm."

His additional film credits include "Excalibur," "Dune," "Lifeforce," "Lady Jane," "L.A. Story," "Robin Hood: Men in Tights," "Gunmen," "Jeffrey," "Conspiracy Theory," "Masterminds," "Dad Savage" and "Safe House." He has also lent his distinctive voice to such animated features as "Prince of Egypt," "Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius," "Chicken Little" and "Bambi II," among others.

One of the most distinguished theatre actors of our time, Stewart has continued to return to the stage throughout his career. His extensive theatre repertoire encompasses numerous plays on Broadway and in London's West End, as well as the stages of major cities in the U.S. and his native England. He also has a longstanding relationship with the Royal Shakespeare Company, which spans more than forty years and includes dozens of productions, both classical and contemporary.

On the 2001 New Year's Honours list, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II conferred on Stewart the order of the Officer of the British Empire (O.B.E.).

**ZIYI ZHANG** (Karai) made her English-language film debut in Rob Marshall's award-winning drama "Memoirs of a Geisha." For her role, Zhang received Golden Globe, Screen Actors Guild and BAFTA Award nominations for Best Actress. She is currently filming "Horsemen," a psychological thriller, in which she stars with Dennis Quaid.



Zhang was previously recognized for her role in Ang Lee's Oscar-winning action drama "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon," winning an Independent Spirit Award and a Toronto Film Critics Association Award for Best Supporting Actress, as well as gaining a BAFTA Award nomination in the same category. She received another BAFTA Award nomination for her work in Zhang Yimou's "House of Flying Daggers," for which she also won the Huabiao Film Award, one of China's premiere film accolades.

Zhang also starred in Wong Kar-Wai's acclaimed film "2046," for which she was named Best Actress by the Hong Kong Film Critics Society and won a Hong Kong Film Award for Best Actress. She most recently starred in Feng Xiaogang's "The Banquet," for which she was nominated for Best Actress at the 2007 Asian Film Festival.

Zhang's other film credits include the Cannes Film Festival selection "Princess Raccoon," for director Seijun Suzuki; Yong Hou's "Jasmine Flower," for which Zhang received a Golden Rooster for Best Actress; Lou Ye's "Purple Butterfly," which was a Palme d'Or selection at the 2003 Cannes Film Festival; and Zhang Yimou's martial arts actioner "Hero," which earned Oscar, Golden Globe and BAFTA Award nominations for Best Foreign Language Film.

Zhang attended China's most prestigious drama school, the Central Drama College in Beijing. She made her film debut in Zhang Yimou's award-winning film "The Road Home," which later screened at the 2001 Sundance Film Festival.

In May of 2006, Zhang became the youngest person to serve on the jury of the Cannes Film Festival.

**LAURENCE FISHBURNE** (Narrator) has been honored for his work on both the stage and screen. In 1994, he earned an Academy Award nomination for his searing portrayal of Ike Turner in the hit biopic "What's Love Got to Do with It." He more recently shared in two Screen Actors Guild Award nominations for Outstanding Motion Picture Cast: one in 2004 for his role in Clint Eastwood's "Mystic River," and another this year as a member of the

ensemble cast of the acclaimed historical feature "Bobby."

Fishburne, who began acting at the age of 10, was only 15 years old when he won a starring role in Francis Ford Coppola's Vietnam War epic "Apocalypse Now." He went on to work with Coppola on "Rumble Fish," "Gardens of Stone" and "The Cotton Club." In addition, Fishburne has collaborated twice with noted director John Singleton, on "Boyz 'N the Hood" and "Higher Learning," earning an NAACP Image Award for Best Actor for the latter. He also starred as the enigmatic Morpheus in the three installments of the groundbreaking "Matrix" franchise: "The Matrix," "The Matrix Reloaded" and "The Matrix Revolutions."

In 2000, Fishburne made his feature film directorial debut "Once in the Life," which he also starred in, produced and wrote, based on his own one-act play "Riff Raff." Fishburne more recently starred in and produced the inspiring drama "Akeelah and the Bee." His other film credits include "Mission: Impossible III," "Assault on Precinct 13," "Hoodlum," "Event Horizon," "Othello," "Just Cause," "Bad Company," "Searching for Bobby Fischer," "Deep Cover," "Class Action," "King of New York," "Red Heat," Spike Lee's "School Daze" and Steven Spielberg's "The Color Purple."

On the small screen, Fishburne starred in and executive produced the acclaimed telefilm "Miss Evers' Boys," for which he won an Emmy for Outstanding Made for Television Movie and earned an Emmy nomination for Outstanding Lead Actor. He had previously garnered Emmy and Golden Globe Award nominations and won an NAACP Image Award for his performance in the HBO movie "The Tuskegee Airmen." He also won an Emmy Award for his role in the premiere episode of Robert De Niro's series "Tribeca." His television work also includes the HBO movie "Always Outnumbered," and the telefilms "A Rumor of War," "For Us the Living" and "Decoration Day."

In 1992, Fishburne won a Tony Award, a Drama Desk Award, an Outer Critics Circle Award and a Theatre World Award for his work in the Broadway production of August Wilson's "Two Trains Running," in which he reprised the role of Sterling Johnson, which he originated at the Yale Repertory Theatre. In

1999, he returned to the Broadway stage to star opposite Stockard Channing in "The Lion in Winter."

**MITCHELL WHITFIELD** (Donatello) counts "TMNT" as his first animated feature film, although he has appeared on stage, screen and television. Starting his career on the New York stage, Whitfield starred in productions of Neil Simon's "Brighton Beach Memoirs" and "Biloxi Blues," before making his major motion picture debut in "Reversal of Fortune." His subsequent credits include "Dogfight," "My Cousin Vinny," "Sergeant Bilko," "I Love You, Don't Touch Me!," "Best Men" and "Lost & Found."

On television, Whitfield is perhaps best known for his recurring role as Barry the orthodontist on "Friends," opposite Jennifer Aniston. His other credits include starring roles on the series "Minor Adjustments" and "Head Over Heels," as well as guest starring roles on such shows as "Curb Your Enthusiasm" and "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation."

Whitfield has also been a top voice-over artist in recent years, and has been heard in commercials for Coca-Cola, McDonald's, Comcast, American Express, Burger King and Blockbuster Video, to name only a few. He can also be heard weekly as one of the stars of the hit ABC cartoon series "W.I.T.C.H."

**JAMES ARNOLD TAYLOR** (Leonardo) has enjoyed success as a voice-over actor in every facet of the industry, from animated films to television cartoons, and from commercials to video games. On television, he can currently be heard as the voice of the title character on the CW cartoon series "Johnny Test," as well as the voices of Wooldoor Sockbat on Comedy Central's "Drawn Together," Axel on Toon Disney's "A.T.O.M.: Alpha Teens on Machines," and Obi-Wan Kenobi on the Cartoon Network's "Star Wars: Clone Wars." He considers his greatest honor to be taking over the voice of Fred Flintstone in recent cartoons and commercials.

Taylor's direct-to-video projects include "The Animatrix" and "Atlantis: Milo's Return." He has also lent his voice to more than 50 recent video game

titles, including "Marvel: Ultimate Alliance," the "Syphon Filter" series, and the "Final Fantasy X" series, as well as the games for such blockbuster films as "Pirates of the Caribbean," "X-Men," "Spider-Man," "Shrek" and "The Lord of the Rings."

In addition to creating original voices, Taylor is often called upon to re-create actors' voices when taking over a role for video games, direct-to-video project or commercial. He also keeps busy from his home studio with regular promo work for Fox, Spike, G4, and Game Show Network, among others.

**MIKEY KELLEY** (Michelangelo) is a veteran voice-over actor who has lent his talent to a wide range of film and television animated projects, including "Scooby-Doo and the Cyber Chase," "Rugrats: All Grown Up," "Ben 10," "Loonatics Unleashed," "Rocket Power" and "The Land Before Time," among others. Kelley has also been featured in a variety of video games, including "Tony Hawk's Underground," "Full Spectrum Warrior," "Metal Gear Solid," and the upcoming "Spider-Man 3."

A native of Quincy, Massachusetts, Kelley is a graduate of Boston's Emerson College. Shortly after relocating to Los Angeles, he landed his first major animation role when he was cast as the lead in "Invasion America" for The WB Network. The show became the first dramatic animated series to air in primetime on network television.

**NOLAN NORTH** (Raphael / Nightwatcher) is perhaps best known for his long-running role as Dr. Chris Ramsey on the daytime drama "Port Charles." He has more recently appeared in guest roles on such series as "Ugly Betty," "Big Love," "NCIS," "JAG" and "Six Feet Under." In addition, his voice has been heard in the animated feature "The Wild," the videos "Ultimate Avengers" and "Ultimate Avengers II," and on episodes of the cartoon series "Ben 10" and "The Grim Adventures of Billy and Mandy." He will also voice the character of Cyclops in the new animated series "Wolverine and the X-Men."

North has also done voice-over work for numerous video games, including "Lost Planet: Extreme Condition," "Agatha Christie: Murder on the Orient Express," "Titan Quest," "Cars," "Pirates of the Caribbean: The Legend of Jack Sparrow," "Final Fantasy XII," "The Lord of the Rings: The Battle for Middle-Earth," "24: The Game," "50 Cent: Bulletproof," "Dungeons & Dragons: Dragonshard" and "Evil Dead: Regeneration," among many others.

## **ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS**

**KEVIN MUNROE** (Director/Writer) has spent the last decade in the animation industry, working on television shows, feature films, comic books and video games. "TMNT" marks his feature film directorial debut, although his experience in the animation arena ranges from screenplays to production design to direction.

He has worked as a writer, artist and director for such companies as Walt Disney Studios, Warner Bros., Cartoon Network, Fox, The Jim Henson Company, Stan Winston Studios and Nickelodeon. He also wrote the critically acclaimed comic book series *El Zombo Fantasma*, which he co-created with Dave Wilkins for Dark Horse Comics, and *Olympus Heights* from IDW Publishing.

Munroe also created, scripted and produced the international Christmas special "Donner" for ABC Family and TV-Loonland.

Cited by *Animation Magazine* as one of the "Rising Stars of CGI," Munroe is currently writing the screenplay for Imagi Studios' next CG-animated motion picture, based on Japan's popular "Gatchaman" anime franchise, which he will also direct for a 2008 release.

**THOMAS K. GRAY** (Producer) currently serves as the President and CEO of Imagi USA.

Previously, as the head of production for Golden Harvest, Gray was the architect of the original "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" film franchise.

Released in the early 1990s, the TMNT film trilogy collectively earned more than \$256 million domestically. The first, 1990's "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles," held the record for the highest-grossing independent movie for seven years. During his tenure at Golden Harvest, Gray was also involved in several internationally successful Jackie Chan films, including "The Protector."

Gray has had over 30 years of experience, encompassing production, marketing and distribution in the global motion picture industry. Over the course of his career, he has also held management positions with United Artists, Warner Bros. and CIC (Paramount/Universal partnership). He was named President and Chief Executive Officer of Imagi USA in 2004.

In addition to producing "TMNT," Gray was a producer on Imagi's new "Highlander: The Search for Vengeance," an anime movie from acclaimed Japanese director Yoshiaki Kawajiri, which is scheduled for release in June 2007.

Imagi USA is currently developing two CG-animated superhero properties: a feature film based on "Gatchaman," the long-running Japanese anime franchise for release in 2008; and a feature film version of "Astro Boy," which follows the adventures of the cartoon character who was first introduced as manga in the 1950s and gained international popularity on television in the 1960s.

**H. GALEN WALKER** (Producer) is the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Imagi USA.

Prior to entering the film industry, Walker spent a decade as a studio and touring lead guitarist, performing with such artists as Kingdom Come, The Runaways and Cellmates. Segueing to motion pictures, Walker established himself as a sound designer and post-production sound supervisor. His credits include Sofia Coppola's "The Virgin Suicides," and "Blind Horizon," starring Val Kilmer, to name only a few.

Walker went on to open his own independent post-production sound company and subsequently developed a joint venture known as Pacifica Media Affiliates (PMA), consisting of five Hollywood sound studio facilities.

Following the successful acquisition of PMA by Technicolor, Walker joined Imagi USA in 2004 as its COO.

"TMNT" marks Walker's first film as a producer. He is also a producer on Imagi's "Highlander: The Search for Vengeance," directed by acclaimed anime director Yoshiaki Kawajiri, who brings his distinctive visual style to the immortal Colin MacLeod's quest for revenge in the future. The film is slated for release in June 2007.

**PAUL WANG** (Producer) has been involved in filmmaking and computer graphics for the last 20 years. After running Four-D, his own boutique animation house in New York, Wang entered the computer-generated visual effects industry, where he created FX for such movies as "Batman Forever" and "The Peacemaker."

Wang later joined PDI/DreamWorks where, for almost a decade, he worked on such groundbreaking animated features as the company's first animated feature, "Antz," the Oscar-winning "Shrek," and the more recent hit "Madagascar." He also worked on the theme park ride "Shrek 4D," and DreamWorks Television's computer animated series "Father of the Pride."

Wang joined Imagi Studios in 2005 as Chief Creative Officer and Chief Technical Officer.

He holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in Communications Design from the Pratt Institute and a Bachelors Degree from the University of California, Berkeley.

**FRANCIS KAO** (Executive Producer) founded Imagi Studios in 2000. In addition to his roles as Deputy Chairman & Co-Chief Executive Officer, he is responsible for the company's overall creative vision and strategy.

Kao's additional credits as an executive producer include Imagi's CG-animated television series "Zentrix" (2002), the 2005 CG feature film "Digital Monster X-Evolution," and the upcoming anime film "Highlander: The Search for Vengeance," due out in June 2007. His future projects include CG-animated feature films based on "Gatchaman" and "Astro Boy."

Kao was born and raised in Hong Kong, where Imagi is headquartered. He graduated from California State University, Sacramento, where he studied business and finance.

**PETER LAIRD** (Executive Producer), sole owner of Mirage Studios, Inc., co-created the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles in 1984 and, since the dissolution of the partnership with co-creator Kevin Eastman in 2000, has been the major creative force behind the revival of the TMNT property in television, film and merchandise.

In addition to executive producing the TMNT movie, Mr. Laird was a key creative consultant on the script and all the major character designs for the film.

**GARY RICHARDSON** (Executive Producer) is CEO of the Mirage Group, the group of companies that, for the last 20 years, have managed, nurtured and protected the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles property, one of the most successful and respected children's entertainment and merchandising properties of all time.

**FREDERICK U. FIERST** (Executive Producer) has represented Mirage Studios and the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles property for the past 20 years.

In addition, he represents numerous high profile clients and properties in the toy, television, interactive, film and licensing industries. His specialties include packaging and structuring television and film projects, and negotiating agreements for video game development and distribution, as well as for toys, comic books, home video and other merchandising activities. He also coordinates worldwide intellectual property registration and protection activities for a number of his clients.

**FELIX IP** (Co-Producer) has been with Imagi Studios since it was set up in 2000. Based in Hong Kong, Ip served as director and art director on the company's first production, the prize-winning television series "Zentrix,"



which was aired in Europe and Asia. He subsequently worked at Imagi as the Hong Kong creative director on DreamWorks Television's "Father of the Pride," the first network primetime fully computer-animated series, which premiered on NBC in August 2004.

Currently, Ip is Imagi's Creative Director and Head of Development in Asia. Prior to joining the group, he had over 10 years of experience in graphic design, multimedia development and games production.

Ip has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Graphic Design from Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

**MICHAEL J. ARNOLD** (Line Producer) has been part of the independent film community for several years. Most notably, he has worked with Golden Harvest Films and Rim Film Distributors. "TMNT" marks his first producer credit.

**KLAUS BADELT** (Composer) has composed the scores for a wide range of films, from mainstream hits to smaller independent releases. His recent film credits include Wolfgang Petersen's "Poseidon"; Kurt Wimmer's "Ultraviolet"; Richard Donner's "16 Blocks"; China's Golden Globe-nominated feature "The Promise"; "Constantine," starring Keanu Reeves; and the blockbuster "Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl," for director Gore Verbinski.

Badelt began composing for films in his native Germany and built his Hollywood career through collaborations with such composers as Hans Zimmer and Michael Kamen. His first American feature as a sole composer was Sean Penn's "The Pledge," starring Jack Nicholson. His other early film credits included Werner Herzog's "Invincible"; Kathryn Bigelow's "K-19: The Widowmaker," starring Harrison Ford; Kurt Wimmer's "Equilibrium"; Roger Donaldson's "The Recruit," teaming Al Pacino and Colin Farrell; "Ned Kelly," starring Heath Ledger and Orlando Bloom; and "Basic," starring John Travolta and Samuel L. Jackson.

In addition, Badelt has composed additional score music for such films as "Gladiator," "Mission: Impossible II" "Hannibal" and "Pearl Harbor."

**JOHN DAMIEN RYAN** (Editor) counts "TMNT" as his first feature film as an editor. He previously worked as an assistant editor on the direct-to-video release "The Lion King 1½." He also served as an assistant visual effects editor on the films "Kangaroo Jack" and "Reign of Fire."

Ryan began his animation career as a production assistant on such films as "Mulan" and "Atlantis: The Lost Empire."

**SIMON MURTON** (Production Designer) has worked in the art department on more than 30 live-action features. "TMNT" marks his first animated film credit.

He served as the art director on Alex Proyas' action thriller "The Crow" and the sci-fi actioner "Fortress," and as the assistant art director on "Super Mario Bros." Murton's additional credits include "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," "The Island," "I, Robot," "The Matrix Revolutions," "Pearl Harbor," "Galaxy Quest," "Sleepy Hollow," "What Dreams May Come" and "Stargate."

**KITH NG** (Visual Effects Supervisor) began his career in Japan a decade ago as a freelance CG animator. Over the past eight years, he has worked on more than 60 television spots for such major companies as Procter & Gamble, Coca-Cola and McDonald's. The Chinese Coca-Cola commercial entitled "Clay Dolls," on which Ng served as a senior animator, was selected to screen at Siggraph 2001.

Ng has also worked as a CG supervisor on the Stephen Chow-directed feature "Kung Fu Hustle," as well as several games, including Ubisoft's "Splinter Cell" and "Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow."

**KIM OOI** (Supervising Animator) has worked in animation in such far-flung locations as Vancouver, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Los Angeles.

A graduate of Vancouver Film School, Ooi began his animation career in local commercials, as well as children's cartoons. He subsequently created storyboards for commercials at major advertising agencies in Shanghai and

Hong Kong. He also supervised TV cartoons at an animation house in Hangzhou, China.

Ooi served as animation director on Imagi's 3D-animated television series "Zentrix." Working at Imagi in Hong Kong, he was also an animation supervisor on DreamWorks Television's "Father of the Pride," the first fully CG-animated primetime series.

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